

DRAFT Executive Summary and Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Manchester (the City) retained Lansing Melbourne Group, LLC (LMG) to conduct a downtown parking study. For the purpose of this study and analysis, an area of approximately 88 blocks has been identified as the Parking Study Area. This area is bounded by Salmon Street to the north, Hayward Street to the south, the Merrimack River to the west and Pine Street to the east (refer to Figure 1 for more detail).

OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND

The usage of the parking system was evaluated during three time periods of a representative typical weekday to determine peak occupancy. The parking system was delineated by owner– type (privately owned versus city–owned) and whether the parking was located off–street or on–street or operated as short–term (such as visitor parking) or long–term (such as employee parking). A Microsoft Excel-based spreadsheet model was developed to model changes to the parking system based on changes in employment. Documentation on the model application is found in the Appendix to this report.

The total public and private parking supply for the study area is 15,806 spaces. Of these, 12,867 spaces are located in off–street public and private parking facilities, with the remaining 2,939 spaces located on–street. The City owns and controls 6,882 off– and on–street spaces in the study area (3,943 spaces off–street plus 2,939 spaces on–street).

Based on the study findings, during a typical weekday (Tuesday through Thursday), the peak period occurs between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM (midday peak period), the highest parking demand was measured comprised of 10,266 parked vehicles, resulting in an occupancy rate of 65 percent.

In general, the on–street parking located in the North Canal subarea has the highest occupancy rate at 87 percent, followed closely by the on–street parking in the Millyard North and CBD East subareas at 83 and 82 percent occupancy, respectively. The subareas where on–street parking is highest represents 1,112 spaces, or 38 percent of the entire on–street parking supply. However, the downtown on–street system in Manchester is complicated by the on–street permits sold for employee and residential parking.

The City on and off–street parking supply meets the needs of the current parking demand. The City off–street surface parking demand nears capacity in the Millyard North, CBD East, and CBD West at 83, 82, and 82 percent respectively. The target occupancy rate in a downtown the size and nature of Manchester should be between 80 and 85 percent. The City on–street parking supply is also well under capacity with an average occupancy of 66 percent with rates at 87, 83, and 82 percent for the North Canal, Millyard North, and CBD East subareas, respectively.

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RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

There is a lengthy list of draft recommendations provided in this report. This list should provide the basis for adoption of a Parking Master Plan (PMP). The preparation of a PMP should be part of the next logical phase, the Implementation Phase. The Implementation Phase will identify and refine:

- goals and objectives for adoption by BMA;
- the budget required for operation of the reorganized parking system;
- a detailed capital improvement plan;
- staffing plan; and
- strategies for rollout of recommendations.

The PMP should be the main deliverable of the next logical phase of study – the Implementation Phase. The Implementation Phase will provide refinements and strategies for actual implementation of recommendations included in this study. The recommendations listed herein are for approval and adoption by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The majority of recommendations direct the “City”, a “City department”, the “Parking Office” or “Parking Department” to take action. The intent is that the appropriate department with the requisite authority takes action in the short-term (as directed by BMA) and the reorganized parking system (Parking Department or Parking Office), when in force.

Should the BMA decide to move forward with the majority of recommendations, a single department or point of responsibility is necessary to maintain momentum, coordination, and public relations. LMG recommends that this single point of contact be assigned to the City Finance Department and that the Finance Department take immediate action to advertise and hire a Parking Manager.

There are a total of 39 recommendations provided throughout Chapters 4 and 5 in the report as summarized below (there are another 21 ideas suggested for improving the parking system listed in Chapter 7). The recommendations have been organized and numbered differently in this public meeting handout than they are in the report. The numbers in this handout will not correspond to the same recommendations in the report - Please refer to the report for backup and documentation for each recommendation.

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ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Recommendation No. 1 – The BMA should assign responsibility for managing the transition of reorganization to the Finance Department.

Recommendation No. 2 – The BMA should authorize the hiring of a Parking Manager by the Finance Department.

Recommendation No. 3 – The BMA should authorize the Finance Department to retain a qualified parking consultant to develop the Implementation Plan.

Recommendation No. 4 – The BMA should adopt the parking organization described above in this report subject to refinements in the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 5 – The BMA should adopt a policy that the reorganized parking system will achieve a self-supporting level of financial stability.

Recommendation No. 6 - The BMA should recognize and adopt the following policy guidelines as part of the PMP:

1. Strategy in future lease negotiations or renewals should come from the Implementation Phase.
2. Efforts should be made to ensure that every commitment made by the City moves it one-step closer to achievement of its long-term goals.
3. Tactical matters should fall to the parking department head. Issues specifically negotiated in the leases such as rates, operation, availability and reservation for future use should be managed within the context of the system.
4. Ownership should be the goal, not leasehold. If a public private partnership is considered important to support the development of a specific project or to attract a specific tenant, the City should consider options such as condominium ownership of the spaces and support of the underlying construction debt.
5. Great care should be exercised to keep from committing large blocks of spaces to a single property or business owner. This can cause great difficulty in future efforts to obtain financing.
6. Lease terms should be limited to short periods with opportunities for renewal at market rate terms.
7. Separate rate structures should be developed for intergovernmental relationships.

Recommendation No. 7 – The BMA should immediately look to assess the need for the parking spaces leased from Wall Street. This effort should be coordinated through the new Parking Manager or the consultant during the implementation phase, if the Manager is not brought on board within 180 days.

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Recommendation No. 8 – Adopt Action Items in following Table 21.

Recommendation No. 9 – Integrate parking planning reviews in the planning and zoning review and approval process in the CBD and AMX districts. The City (Parking Office) should update and revise, as necessary, the current City ordinances related to parking requirements, as well as develop new policy guidelines and requirements and parking study guidelines as part of the Implementation Phase.

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Table 21 – Enforcement Observations and Actions

Item	Observation	Impact or Comments	Action	Benefit
1	Police Officers are diverted from the Police Department's core mission - Public Safety.	Police Officers should focus on Public Safety not parking control.	Provide an adequate number of PCOs.	Increased focus on provision of Public Safety by current Officers.
2	Parking control is a secondary task for Police Officers.	Parking control is not consistent and therefore, by design, will not consistently be aligned with management objectives of the Parking Office.	Assign PCOs to the Parking Office.	City gains ability to modify parking behavior consistent with Parking Office objectives.
3	Police Officers do not have adequate technology.	Increased costs for processing, tracking tickets more difficult, no clear reporting systems, and no data output to assist in management practices.	Implement adequate technology including software, hardware, policies, objectives, plus items 1 and 2.	Reduced administrative costs, immediate feedback on parking behavior, increased fines revenue, more "City Ambassadors" on the street and available to community.
4	Four PCOs not adequate to cover Citywide-parking system. Need additional PCOs.	Inconsistent management, abuse of the system, loss of available parking for intended users. Overtime must be paid for parking control for Verizon Wireless Arena and Fisher Cat events. They need more people, not more vehicles. They need to be assigned to territories and driven to their territory in the morning. Their territories should be rotated.	Hire an adequate number of PCOs given the geographic boundaries, parking inventory, and job description. Provide on-going training through industry certification programs. Review and add enforcement vehicles as needed.	Increased efficiencies in the system citywide. Increased moral by PCOs. Ability of City to manage PCOs and assigned routes. Can adequately benchmark PCO activity and make changes when necessary. Increased revenue and increased accessibility of the parking system by intended users.
5	One person responsible for booting of scofflaws. Lack of adequate technology to identify booters, react timely enough to actually boot them, and then track through the payment process. Hit and miss approach to identifying and booting scofflaws.	A backlog of approximately 900 vehicles. Scofflaws will increase since the "threat to boot" will be largely ignored. This can have a huge impact on the number of available short-term parking spaces available, especially downtown. Costs are higher than required because of inefficiencies. The impact of this cost is much higher than for ordinary fines processing since there is ultimately, minimal revenue collected from scofflaws.	Outsource activity through existing towing contracts the City already has. Upload and maintain dynamic scofflaw database list in PCO ticket writing equipment which will allow immediate identification of scofflaws - so booting can be enacted. Enact a revised towing ordinance.	Increase compliance with management practices. Elimination of chronic abuser's can effectively increase the number of spaces available to intended users - especially in the CBD Elm Street corridor. Increased fines revenue.
6	Backlog of violations.	Statute of limitations exceeded, court cases dismissed and valuable internal personnel resources lost that could be directed in more effective activities. Consider requesting changes to state law that attaches unpaid fines to State vehicle registration and/or license renewals.	See item 1, 2 and 3. The fines ordinance should be revised so those summonses are issued. A summons does not expire.	Increased efficiencies within City government increased parking management compliance, abuse of parking system reduced. Revenue increased and costs reduced.
7	No current access to parking violations data, parking use, or problems with on-street parking.	Lack of ability to react to changes in behavior, direct parkers to available parking, enforce parking or resolve issues in real-time.	See item 3.	See items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
8	Current technology including computer equipment, software, ticket writing, and communications are inadequate and/or obsolete.	Lost labor hours, increased costs, lack of control over achieving objectives, increased frustration by staff. Lack of ability to upgrade current equipment.	See item 3.	See items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

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PARKING AND ENFORCEMENT

Recommendation No. 10 – The BMA should relegate recommendations on enforcement needs, including staffing and equipment, to the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 11 – A target vacancy rate of 80 percent is recommended by LMG and should be approved by The BMA as part of the PMP.

Recommendation No. 12 – The BMA should authorize a feasibility analysis of contracting with a private operator for short-term operation and management of the on-street parking during the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 13 – Based on the previous discussions, the BMA should adopt the following strategies as part of the PMP:

1. Offer to negotiate a reduction of parking requirements for development projects that incorporate parking structures rather than parking lots;
2. Offer density bonuses to projects that incorporate parking structures rather than parking lots;
3. Endorse mixed-use facilities where feasible to reduce the cost of parking and increase the revenue stream used to pay for the structure. Commercial lease rates are greater on a per foot basis than what can be generated from a parking space;
4. During the Implementation Phase, authorize the potential to use TIF funding for financing the cost to construct parking structures (if shown to be needed): and
5. Entertain sale-leaseback agreements to identify the specific parameters and benefits to the City.

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RATES AND TECHNOLOGY

Recommendation No. 14 – The BMA should authorize the adoption of the rates shown in Table 22 as a maximum. It should be at the direction of the Parking Office to implement at its discretion (without additional authorization by the BMA) based on achieving goals in the PMP. The rate tables should be updated every year and should identify the anticipated rates for the next three to five years, by year. **The first “Rate” column is existing rate; the second “Rate” column is maximum rate over 3 to 5 year period.**

Table 22 – Parking Fees and Fines

Type	Hourly	Rate	Rate
Premium	Average on-street meter cost	\$0.50	\$0.75
Premium	Average attended cost per ½ hour	\$0.25	\$0.60
Premium	Average off-street hourly	\$0.50	\$0.75
Flex-Park	Average on- and off-street hourly	Not applicable	\$0.45
Flex-Park	Average per use (one entry/one exit)	Not applicable	\$3.50
Daily	Average daily maximum	\$7.00	\$7.00
Type	Permits	Monthly	Monthly
Unrestricted	Average off-street cost for 24/7 access	\$70.00 to \$72.50	\$100.00
Restricted A	Average off-street costs for 24/7 entry before 5pm	Not applicable	\$66.00
Restricted B	Residential off-street permit 6 pm to 8 am	Not applicable	\$30.00
Restricted C	Residential on-street permit 6 pm to 8 am	Not applicable	\$35.00
Fines		Per Ticket	Per Ticket
Overtime Parking		\$10.00	\$10.00
2 hour discount for early pay		Not applicable	\$5.00

Recommendation No. 15 – An increase in the vehicle registration fees should be approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) as a source of additional revenue to support the parking system reorganization. The need will be documented and if warranted, the amount of the increase will be proposed as part of the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 16 – The BMA should direct the City to standardize the enforcement times for on-street paid parking. On-street paid parking in retail, commercial, dining and entertainment areas should be in effect and enforced from 8am to 10pm Monday through Saturday and 11am to 4pm on Sundays. Off-street paid parking should follow the same hours of operations and enforcement. An overlay district should be developed for the Arena area to ensure that paid parking is provided. New meter technology will provide ability to charge event parking differently from regular parking.

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Recommendation No. 17 – The BMA should approve the adoption of a “forgiveness” ticket policy that reduces but does not dismiss a ticket issued in the downtown area. The specifics will be identified in the financial and operations plan as part of the reorganization presented in the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 18 – The BMA should approve the replacement of off-street meters in surface lots with pay by space or pay and display machines. The effectiveness of the technology would be evaluated before the program is moved to on-street locations (see recommendation for Elm Street demonstration project).

Recommendation No. 19 – The BMA should authorize a detailed study in the Implementation Phase to evaluate, cost, develop a finance plan, acquire, and install all new technology system-wide.

Recommendation No. 20 – The BMA should direct the Parking Department to immediately begin investigating the applicable technology to replace the mechanical meters. This recommendation should be completed as a priority in the implementation phase.

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PERMITS

Recommendation No. 21 – The BMA should direct the appropriate City department(s) to stop issuing new permits and sunset the current practice of issuing permits over a maximum 90-day period (the shorter timeframe, the better). A new written policy should be adopted and implemented during this timeframe.

Recommendation No. 22 – At such time as feasible, and in concert with the previous recommendation, the issuance of parking permits should be managed through real-time reports by the Parking Office. Purchasers of permits who are not active users of the system will be expunged and relegated to the lowest priority on the waiting list.

Recommendation No. 23 – The BMA should direct the appropriate City department(s) to sunset the current residential permit parking practice and implement a policy statement on issuance of residential permits including the list provided below. The Policy should be subject to change based on parking conditions over time.

Recommendation No. 24 – The BMA should authorize the City to revise the residential permit parking ordinance so that the requirement for the applicant to hold a “valid State of New Hampshire” license is revised to “valid driver’s license”.

Recommendation No. 25 – The BMA should authorize the creation of one residential parking zone covering the AMX and CBD zoning districts.

Recommendation No. 26 – The BMA should require the City to enact a moratorium on issuance of new permits in high demand lots and garages. When in the best interest of all parties, parkers should be directed to private lots where capacity exists. The City should facilitate this negotiation between developers and parking facility owners.

Recommendation No. 27 – The BMA should direct the City (Parking Office) to post “no permit parking allowed” in specific on-street parking locations at the north end of Commercial Street to preserve on-street parking capacity for commercial and retail businesses that depend on on-street parking for their customers. The signs may also require restrictions during certain times, for instance from 9am to 5pm, when the on-street supply is fully usurped by permit parkers.

Recommendation No. 28 – The BMA should direct the City to initiate the planning, design, and implementation of the Arms Street Lot controlled permit parking plan as discussed in this report.

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VALET PARKING

Recommendation No. 29 – The BMA should direct the Parking Office to establish and enact a policy for creation of individual valet parking zones for specific businesses. The City should also support, encourage, and facilitate the creation of a larger zone based valet parking service managed by the private sector.

PARKING EXPANSION

Recommendation No. 30 – The BMA should direct the City to obtain an appraisal for the garage (already in-progress) and negotiate a sale of the CNH garage to the owners of the hotel and convention center.

Recommendation No. 31 – The BMA should approve the issuance of an RFQ to enter into one or more development projects with private sector proposers for the development of mixed-use projects and public parking in the Arena and ballpark subareas

Recommendation No. 32 - The BMA should direct the City to enter into negotiations to sell the Granite Street Lot to the owner(s) of the adjacent Millyard Building.

Recommendation No. 33 - The BMA should direct the City to enter into negotiations to sell the Seal Tanning Lot to the owner(s) of the adjacent Millyard Building owner.

Recommendation No. 34 - The BMA should direct the City to develop a financing and development plan for the planning, design and construction of a three-bay, five level parking structure on the Bedford lot as soon as reasonably possible.

Recommendation No. 35 – The City in conjunction with the Parking Department should investigate the options and costs related to constructing remote parking along Commercial Street and serving that parking with a shuttle.

Recommendation No. 36 – All development proposals should provide sufficient parking to meet the parking needs of the project plus replace any loss in parking that may impact the availability of the parking supply to other users in the service area of the parking lot. This finding should be determined through a shared parking study/analysis conducted by the developer per the direction of the City.

Recommendation No. 37 - The BMA should direct the City to prepare and adopt shared parking study approach for use by the developer in such cases as part of the Implementation Phase.

Recommendation No. 38 - The BMA should adopt a policy regarding the evaluation of new development proposals as an opportunity to implement the PMP. This opportunity could be varied, from jointly developing and expanding the public parking component, to condominiumization, sale/leaseback, management plans, or other collaborations that benefits the City and the developer, development and/or the economy.

Recommendation No. 39 – The BMA should direct the City to initiate the planning, design, and implementation of at least two cross-street linear parking lots as discussed in this report.